

MR Book Reviews



THE BATTLE FOR PUSAN, Addison Terry, Presidio Press, Novato CA, 2000, 233 pages, \$27.95.

Addison Terry was an artillery forward observer for the US 27th Infantry, which in 1950 was hurriedly dispatched to Korea at the outbreak of war. Terry's regiment, the "fire brigade" for the Pusan Perimeter, was thrown against enemy breakthroughs and threats.

Terry's soldiers were from a Japanese occupation force whose first sergeants had forgotten the need to set perimeter defenses, whose officers were unable to control their troops, whose equipment failed to work and whose understrength units were sent unprepared into battle.

Terry's inexperienced South Korean troops had been drafted off the streets and drilled with spears behind the front while they waited for patrols to return with captured weapons. They were the lucky ones, the unlucky ones organized regiments and took basic and officer training on the trucks while going to the battlefield.

What separates this book from other memoirs is Terry's mobility as a forward observer. *The Battle for Pusan* is his journal and provides an

immediacy and detail not otherwise available. The result is a detailed view of an unprepared army thrown into a meatgrinder war.

Kevin L. Jamison,
Kansas City, Missouri

WHY VIETNAM INVADED CAMBODIA: Political Culture and the Causes of War, Stephen J. Morris, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1999, 315 pages, \$29.95.

Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia is a fresh treatment of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in January 1979 by a 100,000-man multicorps mechanized force. The invasion led to the 10-year occupation by the People's Army of Vietnam.

Cold War *realpolitik* led the West to support the noncommunist resistance and China to support the genocidal communist Khmer Rouge in a protracted war fought from Thailand against the Vietnamese. The conflict ended only when UNTAC, the largest peacekeeping force in UN history, assumed Cambodia's sovereignty for two years before the June 1993 election.

Cambodia is a struggling democracy. Vietnam remains communist. Its leaders speak to academics sparingly, and its archives are certainly not open. Western readers accustomed to verbatim transcripts and diary entries will not find them in this book. Nevertheless, Stephen J. Morris capitalizes on contemporaneous reports, including summarized conversations between Vietnam's top leaders and the Soviet ambassador, submitted by the Soviet Embassy in Hanoi.

Morris gained unique access to Soviet Central Committee archives in the early 1990s. Access has since been closed to most westerners. His book paints the most complete picture yet of what motivated Vietnam's leaders. Morris explains the invasion in terms Vietnam's Marxist-Leninist political culture. He especially dwells on two characteristics that

dominated Vietnamese thinking—ideology and paranoia. But Morris does not stop there; he also details Khmer Rouge provocations that led to the war, thereby defining a model for why and how closed, highly secretive "Chiliastic regimes" can go to war for reasons incomprehensible to the West.

The Khmer Rouge raids, including one in 1977 in which Vietnam captured several Chinese advisers, fueled Vietnamese paranoia that China was determined to cause their downfall out of Sino-Soviet enmity. Although the Vietnamese expressed their frustrations frankly to the Soviet Embassy in Hanoi, the invasion itself apparently caught the Soviet Union completely unaware. The common Cold War belief was that the Soviet Union ordered the invasion to counter Chinese influence with the Khmer Rouge.

This book is purely a political scientist's attempt to explain the causes of the invasion. Other than Morris's pedantic tendency to constantly restate his basic argument, this book is an excellent choice for Southeast Asia specialists and military strategists seeking to understand national-security policymaking by Chiliastic regimes.

MAJ Paul C. Marks, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

VIETNAM, Spencer C. Tucker, University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, 1999, 244 pages, \$42.00.

In *Vietnam*, Spencer Tucker presents a useful synopsis of the Vietnam War's history, from ancient struggles with China to more-recent events. But the work is not an in-depth study of Vietnam or US involvement; it is a compact overview of a country and its wars that provides insight into one of US history's most traumatic periods.

Tucker clearly shows that the US government and its military did not have enough expertise in Vietnamese

culture to sort out the relationships between communism and nationalism that were the war's ideological foundations. Tucker, critical of North Vietnamese atrocities and South Vietnamese ineptness and corruption, takes up the debate historians Andrew Krepinevich and Harry G. Summers Jr. established on whether the best military approach was to pacify or defeat the North Vietnamese army. Either way, the United States failed to define the center of gravity in the north and the south.

Tucker tries to explain US President Lyndon B. Johnson's dilemma over spending for the war or spending on domestic programs. Although Tucker mentions calling up the reserves, he does not devote the attention to it that it deserves. This extremely important decision affected the military's ability to prosecute the war and the nation's willingness to support the conflict. Tucker also criticizes negotiations with North Vietnam because rather than using troop withdrawal as a bargaining chip, the United States reduced the number of troops in country without any concessions from Hanoi. As a result, the 1972 North Vietnamese Easter Offensive achieved considerable territorial gains that only US air power could halt.

The book concludes with a short look at the 1978 Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and its 1979 war with China. The events were mostly lost on a United States no longer interested in a country and a war that had torn it apart and had led to the deaths of more than 55,000 US men and women.

**LTC Richard L. Kiper, USA,
Retired, Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE COMING ANARCHY: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War, Robert D. Kaplan, Random House, NY, 2000, 208 pages, \$21.95.

In 1958, William Lederer and Eugene Burdick published the best-selling book *The Ugly American* (W.W. Norton & Co., NY, 1999). The book's revealing insight into US foreign policy came through related stories that occurred in a fictitious Southeast Asian country.

The *Ugly American* was considered controversial because it accu-

ately portrayed US arrogance, incompetence and corruption. The book title "became synonymous for what was wrong with American foreign policy." Lederer and Burdick's book became mandatory reading for many US State Department foreign-service members.

Like its famous predecessor, Robert Kaplan's book, *The Coming Anarchy*, is a series of related essays that highlight flaws in US foreign policy and security strategy. It also should be mandatory reading for anyone involved in foreign-policy operations and decision making.

Ideally, the implosion of the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War would have led to prosperity, growth and intensive hope throughout the world. However, based on personal experiences and observations, Kaplan gives a realist view of the future.

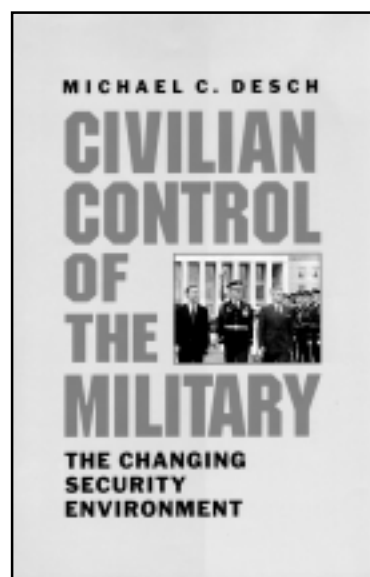
The initial essay, "The Coming Anarchy," suggests a developing paradigm for a post-Cold War world divided between stable countries and those experiencing varying levels of chaos. Kaplan effectively uses historical and current examples to make relevant points.

In "Was Democracy Just a Moment?" Kaplan compares democracy's failure to improve the lives of Russian citizens with what autocracy has done in China. His message, although disturbing, is that authoritarian rulers have a necessary role in the world.

The other essays support Kaplan's hypothesis that democracy is the end state of specific social, political and economic achievements but that it has not been achieved because many societies lack the required conditions. He suggests that achieving democracy might first require authoritarian rule so societies can establish the prerequisites for democracy.

This book might disappoint readers familiar with Kaplan's other works. With the exception of the last essay, the articles are reprints of earlier works. However, it is a good single-source document of the realist vision of the future international political and security environment.

**MAJ Michael C. Aaron, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**



CIVILIAN CONTROL OF THE MILITARY: The Changing Security Environment, Michael C. Desch, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, 1999, 133 pages, \$34.95.

Michael C. Desch's *Civilian Control of the Military* is well written, thoughtful and topical. His central argument, perhaps counterintuitive, is that without a significant external threat the relationship between top civilian leaders and military officers in the post-Cold War era has deteriorated.

Desch posits that democracies with low external threats to national survival tend to elect leaders who have little knowledge of or desire for national defense policy and who prefer to focus on domestic issues. Professional military officers, who naturally prefer offensive doctrines, autonomy and increasing budget shares, clash with national leaders who do not understand or support their causes.

Desch concedes that his model's explanatory power weakens when internal and external threats are either low or high. In these cases Desch looks to other explanations currently offered in the literature—individual factors, state structures, norms within the military and society. Scholars generally agree that currently the US has low external and internal threats, so his approach adds little.

One of the big weaknesses of

Desch's book is his foundational premise that civilian domination of decision making produces optimal national security decisions and relationships. Several prominent military historians and political scientists disagree. Gordon Craig and Stephen Walt provide examples when civilian leaders disregarded objections of leading military leaders and superimposed policies that were tragically flawed or morally bankrupt.

During World War II, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin dominated their respective militaries but failed utterly because of their depraved policies toward noncombatants. During World War I, Winston Churchill was among civilian decision makers who overruled the military and ordered the disastrous Gallipoli Campaign. Anthony Eden's miscalculations led to a flawed British policy during the 1957 Suez Crisis. During the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War, civilian leadership, though dominant, did not produce successful policy. Of course, just as many examples of failure can be offered for times when military figures dominated decision making.

Nevertheless, Desch's concise model offers comprehensive insight. He argues persuasively that when looking for answers from the civil-military relationship within any country the place to start is with threats to that country. Desch ends the book with thoughtful, logically supportable policy recommendations and insightful ideas for future research.

MAJ Christopher P. Gibson,
USA, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

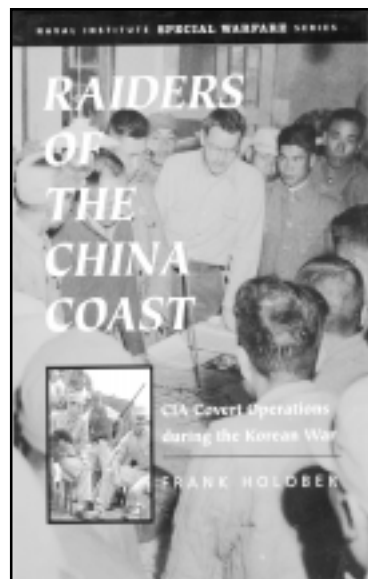
THE US NAVY IN WORLD WAR I: Combat at Sea and in the Air, A.B. Feuer, Praeger Publishers, Westport, CT, 1999, 224 pages, \$55.00.

Books devoted to the US Navy's participation in World War I are rare. Few authors have taken the challenge of shedding new light on a subject often ignored by most naval historians. The operational lessons applicable to naval warfare the conflict presented are few and limited in scope because of late US entry into the war.

The jacket notes and advertising propaganda accompanying A.B. Feuer's *US Navy in World War I* give the impression most questions concerning US Navy involvement would finally be answered. Unfortunately, Feuer's efforts fall short. The book brings to light many unknown aspects of the war, but the book's overall structure makes it extremely difficult for those not versed in naval warfare to determine what is relevant.

At best, this book serves as a basic introduction, leaving other sources to augment the shallow content. Feuer's heavy dependence on personal accounts limits the book's authoritative credentials and relevance to the defense community.

LCDR Timothy J. Charlesworth,
USN, Buffalo Grove, Illinois



RAIDERS OF THE CHINA COAST: CIA Covert Operations During the Korean War, Frank Holober, Naval Institute Press, Washington, DC, 1999, 288 pages, \$32.95.

A major US concern during the Korean War was the possibility of China entering the conflict. No one in the United States wanted to get involved in a land war in Asia against the vast numbers of combatants that China could, and eventually did, send into the fray.

To prevent China from sending troops into Korea, the United States

supported anticommunist guerrillas on mainland China and used Chinese Nationalist troops to raid the Chinese coast. It was impossible for the United States to officially sanction these activities because doing so would have been tantamount to declaring war on China. Therefore, support for these activities fell under the purview of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

The CIA opened a "front" company named Western Enterprises Incorporated (WEI) and staffed it with US Army and Marine Corps officers who were "discharged" from the military then "hired" by the WEI.

WEI members served as advisers, intelligence collectors, trainers, supply officers and bankers. But, for security reasons, they were not to accompany the Nationalist Chinese on raids to the mainland. Some found the temptation too great. Their exploits make interesting reading.

In *Raiders of the China Coast*, Frank Holober introduces what one participant called the "forgotten war's forgotten war" and exposes a secretive part of US participation in Korea, Taiwan and China. He gives no sense of overplaying the US role or of underplaying Nationalist China's capabilities and participation. He describes operations that went well and those that failed.

As to whether the WEI succeeded in its mission, Holober answers with a resounding "perhaps." The truth of how these operations affected Chinese leaders and military is still unknown. The records that would answer the questions are sealed. Nevertheless, Holober has ably cracked the door to the subject.

LTC David G. Rathgeber, USMC,
Quantico, Virginia

PATTON ON LEADERSHIP: Strategic Lessons for Corporate Warfare, Alan Axelrod, Prentice Hall Press, Paramus, NJ, 1999, 271 pages, \$23.00.

Patton on Leadership, a collection of US Army General George S. Patton's quotations and leadership vignettes, demonstrates how business managers can successfully apply military thinking to the most challenging situations. Alan Axelrod

provides excellent insight into the Patton mind—insight that any good business manager can readily understand and implement. The book is especially strong in discussing leadership, attitude and obtaining positive results.

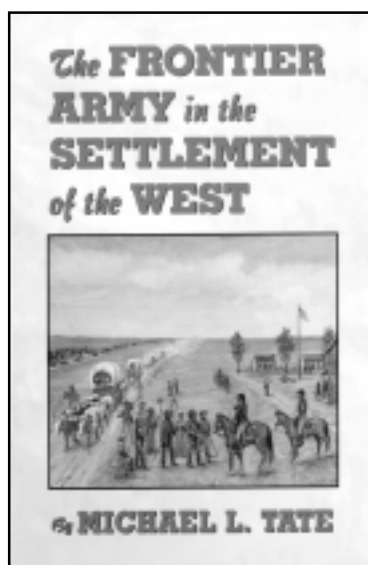
Imagine you are a business leader who has only seen the 1970 Twentieth Century Fox movie, *Patton*, starring George C. Scott. You most likely remember Patton as a rude, arrogant leader who became notorious for slapping one of his soldiers. You might think that a book about such a man would have little to offer. But a quick review of Patton's record will convince business leaders otherwise.

Patton transformed a demoralized, inefficient organization in North Africa into a force that eventually decimated its opposition. Business looks at the bottom line—and what a bottom line Patton produced! His organization—the 3d Army—liberated more civilians and killed more enemy soldiers than any other and “went farther and faster than any other army in the history of warfare.”

Axelrod uses quotes and leadership examples to develop short essays that teach dynamic, memorable lessons. For example, Patton cautions against telling people how to do things. Instead, he says, “Tell them what to do, and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.”

In today's internationally competitive environment, the issues on which Axelrod focuses are more relevant than ever—training, mentoring, communicating, efficiency, courage and audacity. Yet, if this book has one overriding theme, it is simply that people—soldiers or employees—are the single greatest resource. The heart of a successful team—tank crew, infantry squad or business—is simply people. A smart leader will focus on the team's training, preparation, discipline and needs. This book belongs in the library of any one who wants to win at business or war.

MAJ Robert G. Smith, USA,
Germantown, Maryland



THE FRONTIER ARMY IN THE SETTLEMENT OF THE WEST,

Michael L. Tate, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1999, 416 pages, \$34.95.

Those who doubt the parallel course of popular culture and academic attitudes need only examine the history of the US western frontier and its treatment by scholars. For a long period, beginning roughly in the late 19th century, the settlement of the west and the Army's role were glamorized, from the novels of Captain Charles King in the 1890s through movie director John Ford's trilogy of heroic frontier army movies starring John Wayne. Scholarly treatments of the same subjects also tended to present the western Army in a positive light—or at least a neutral one.

Beginning in the late 1960s, attitudes changed; it became fashionable to express contempt for all things military. In Hollywood this took the form of antiwar movies, including those condemning the 19th-century frontier Army. The films depicted frontier soldiers as little short of predators—bestial and often cowardly. Likewise, academic consideration condemned much of the Army's role and often found it to be either ineffective or counterproductive. This was followed in the 1980s by the rise of so-called “new western history” typified by the works of Richard White and Patricia Limerick who stylized the Army's western role negatively as a history of exploita-

tion, racism and economic imperialism.

Much of this is a matter of perspective, since the Army's role in settling the west was composed of myriad elements, both positive and negative. Furthermore, much criticism is based on the imposition of late 20th-century attitudes and beliefs on mid- to late-19th century mores. Michael L. Tate's *Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* comes as a useful corrective to these trends. In his words, he “attempts to access the full performance record of the Army in all of its diverse roles . . . to take the large view and to place the findings in an interpretive framework.”

Tate's treatment of the western Army is especially useful since its central concern is how the Army affected the west's development, from initial exploration through expansion to closing the frontier. Although the book does not always provide enough detail, it thoughtfully explores the Army's relationships to various parts of the larger society.

LTC Thomas K. Adams, USA,
Retired, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

THE PATH TO BLITZKRIEG: Doctrine and Training in the German Army, 1920-1939,

Robert Citino, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO, 1999, 279 pages, \$55.00.

Even in Operation *Desert Storm*'s aftermath, the 1940 *Wehrmacht*'s blitzkrieg victory over France remains the most conspicuous example of the elusive concept of maneuver warfare. In six weeks, Germany annihilated a “peer competitor.” The spectacular German victory still captures soldiers, historians and analysts' imaginations and is continually cited as an example of the Germans' successful adaptation and the Allies' failure to adapt.

Not surprisingly, the 1940 campaign has long inspired quality scholars. *The Roots of Blitzkrieg: Hans von Seeckt and German Military Reform* (University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1994), by James S. Corum, superbly analyzes the prewar German army's role in shaping a bold command style, innovative doctrine and decisive maneuver. The

book's quality might prompt the question, what is left to examine on the topic? Does our understanding of blitzkrieg's origin lack for anything? Apparently, for *The Path of Blitzkrieg* offers avenues of emphasis and interpretation.

Robert Citino shares Corum's view that von Seeckt's leadership in the early years of the *Reichswehr* was crucial in establishing a preference for maneuver-oriented tactics. Yet, Citino finds von Seeckt's faith in the utility of horse-mounted cavalry a conspicuous blind spot in the general's tactical thinking. Although much gentler in his discussion of von Seeckt, Corum discredits him as being the "father" of the blitzkrieg. Citino sees von Seeckt's greatest contribution as his ability to fuse past wisdom with current knowledge, thus readying the German army for rebirth.

This book's unique value is its emphasis on collective training. Where Corum briefly describes German maneuvers and war games, Citino spends several pages on a single exercise, describing the scenario, orders of battle, control measures, course of the exercise and after-action reports. The gratifying detail shows how the interwar German army's rigor, intellectual honesty and adaptive spirit translated into meaningful training.

Von Seeckt insisted on free-play scenarios; a robust staff of umpires and observers; realistic rules of engagement; and perhaps most significant, the simulation of tanks, aircraft and heavy artillery, even though these weapons were denied to the *Reichswehr*.

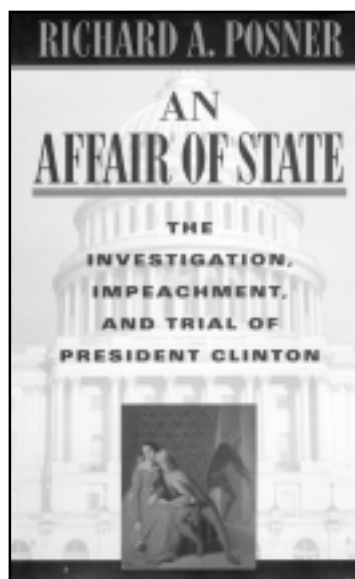
Each year, von Seeckt collected his training observations in a report made mandatory reading for captains and above. Citino analyzes all of these reports, highlighting von Seeckt's commitment to combined arms, initiative and maneuver.

Citino and Corum agree with current scholars who find German General Heinz Guderian less important to the panzer arm's evolution than British historian B.H. Liddell Hart or Guderian would have us believe. Citino finds blitzkrieg's theoretical basis already in place before Adolf

Hitler rose to power.

Willingness to experiment did not mean a lack of controversy. Many senior army leaders doubted the feasibility of armored warfare. Citino again shows how honest, free-play exercises shaped the army's thinking. German exercises showcased tough training, intellectual honesty, high standards and an adaptive spirit. The relevance of Citino's work to problems current US forces face is painfully obvious.

**LTC Scott Stephenson, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**



AN AFFAIR OF STATE: The Investigation, Impeachment, and Trial of President Clinton, Richard A. Posner, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1999, 252 pages, \$24.95.

Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit Richard A. Posner is the author of many works of legal scholarship, bringing his multidisciplinary perspective to *An Affair of State*. Best characterized as historical, the book is not a sterile recitation of the well-publicized events surrounding US President William Clinton's impeachment; it is greatly enhanced with influences from the fields of political science, law, sociology and surprisingly, military science.

While numerous aspects of the case lend themselves to criticism, Posner does not take sides or gratu-

itous potshots; he identifies all of the actors' weaknesses and strengths. As one expects from a senior jurist, his approach is studied, judicious, yet captivating. With scholarly detachment, he preserves and assesses the case, lest the passage of time or revisionism taint it.

Posner's account is a welcome departure from the treatment mainstream and fringe media have given the impeachment. He offers a sound tutorial in what actually occurred, buttressed by even-handed insights about key facts' legal and political significance. However, it is written in plain language by a gifted author who weaves understandable examples and metaphors into his analysis, neither becoming pedantic nor leaving anyone behind.

The military community, with its core values of moral courage and honor, will be disturbed by Posner's frank discussion of actions fraught with expediency and subreption. Also of military interest is a Carl von Clausewitz-inspired analysis of the polarizing, combative posture many institutions and individuals assumed while either prosecuting or defending Clinton and how their effectiveness was blunted by their zeal and the "fog of war."

**MAJ Joseph R. Perlak, USMC,
Quantico, Virginia**

FUTURE WAR AND COUNTER-PROLIFERATION: U.S. Military Responses to NBC Proliferation Threats, Barry R. Schneider, Praeger Publishers, Westport, CT, 1999, 229 pages, \$59.95.

Out of his wealth of experience as a professor, strategic analyst and foreign affairs officer, Barry R. Schneider has produced a virtual textbook of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) possessed by today's repressive states—and potential terrorists—including inherent nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) threats. Schneider provides some of the most impressive open-source maps situating NBC complexes and infrastructures; diagrams or tables estimating potential enemy missile ranges; and charts depicting air base survivability vis-a-vis WMD

missile strikes.

Schneider underscores the fact that if international agreements or other means to forestall WMD production and proliferation falter, weapons programs could be reinitiated within a short time with relatively low-cost delivery means such as tactical ballistic or cruise missiles. Simply put, a state's economic weakness does not necessarily equate to military weakness.

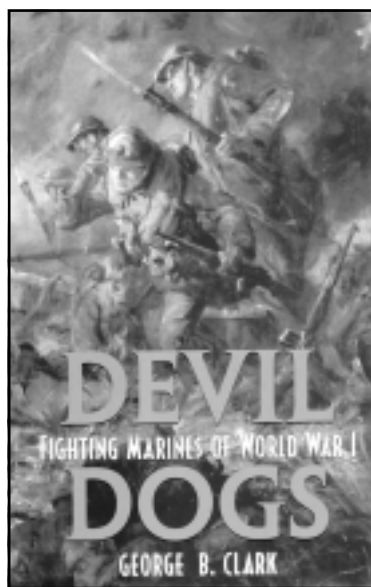
Schneider also assesses US shortfalls in preparedness for protection against NBC attack and provides sound and well-reasoned advice on how the US can prevent such attacks. Because US forces continue to operate from far-flung bases and operating locations, the section on dispersed forces is one of Schneider's most immediately germane discussions.

Rounding out his research, he recaps the threats, potential enemy strategies for employing WMDs, and the array of options available to the US to remedy asymmetric attacks. He includes hypothetical scenarios that flesh out his conclusions and summations, noting that repressive states—usually being militarily weak—would likely use their limited WMD stockpiles to break up friendly coalitions.

Deterrence has its limits, and whether or not the US should intervene with military force is not easily determined. Schneider thoroughly discusses how counterforce options interact with traditional principles of war, especially as they relate to US conflict with states such as Iraq and North Korea.

I have few criticisms of this book; an exploration of how rogue states and terrorist organizations might exploit the microprocessor revolution would have helped round out the discussion. Regardless, this erudite, in-depth study is a paragon of scholarly research, benefiting anyone interested in how WMDs might destabilize or threaten Western forces. Indeed, today's headlines ominously underscore Schneider's conclusion that "unfortunately, time may not be on our side."

**MAJ Jeffrey C. Alfier, USAF,
Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona**



DEVIL DOGS: Fighting Marines of World War I, George B. Clark, Presidio Press, Novato, CA, 1999, 463 pages, \$39.95.

Devil Dogs—a labor of love—is George B. Clark's tribute to the US Marines who fought on the Western Front during World War I. Clark, a former Marine and antiquarian bookseller in New Hampshire, has written and edited other books on the subject. He has mastered the material and tells a compelling story.

Clark narrates the history of the 4th Marine Brigade, which saw action at Verdun, Belleau Wood, Soissons, Marbache Sector, the Saint-Mihiel Offensive, Blanc Mont and the Meuse River Campaign. Each engagement is exhaustively described from company, battalion, regiment and brigade perspectives. He also limns other Marine activities in France as well as the brief post-war occupation of Germany. Clark finds almost all Army and Marine commanders wanting, some because they could not become good combat leaders, others because of their inexperience.

Clark also expands on tactical shortcomings of Army and Marine training and fossilized outlooks of some senior tactical leaders. He rightly attributes these to the prewar military's combat experience in the Caribbean and the Philippines and to the shortage of fully trained staff officers.

Clark concentrates his venom on "the leadership of the officers to whom the Marines were directly subjected," showing how commanders either improved or were relieved. No one escapes his assessment.

Generals Omar Bundy, James Harbord and John A. Lejeune are rightly criticized for their failings at Belleau Wood, Soissons and Blanc Mont. Clark calls the latter two brilliant administrative officers, but failures as combat leaders, speculating on why the former two were promoted while the latter was retained in command. He concludes that it would have caused General John Pershing more political trouble than it was worth to relieve a senior Marine officer without having another equally senior to replace him.

Clark marks World War I as the premier learning experience for that generation's professional military men. The war proved that bravery was not enough. Leaders who attained high rank after the war would be professionally educated and trained, making the military school system strong. Army and Marine Corps commanders were conscious of what their war experiences had taught and wanted to pass the knowledge to their juniors.

Despite Clark's penchant toward unabashed, justifiable unit pride, this book has much that is valuable. However, the good is weighed down by the book's encyclopedic nature. Sometimes the narrative is cluttered with facts that rightfully belong in a note. Although the maps are poorly placed, and there is no glossary, the book should be treated as a casebook and reference for unit organization and small-unit tactics.

**Lewis Bernstein,
Leavenworth, Kansas**

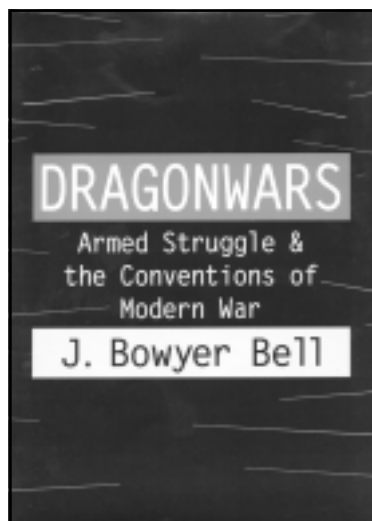
DRAGONWARS: Armed Struggle and the Conventions of Modern War, J. Bowyer Bell, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ, 1999, 445 pages, \$44.95.

Dragonwars is a monograph dealing with an important question confronting the US defense community. Because military operations other than war (MOOTW) are not going away, how can the US military im-

prove its performance in such operations?

J. Bowyer Bell provides a good analysis of what he calls the Dragonworld; that is, the internal structures and dynamics of terrorist and guerrilla movements. Bell's credentials as an analyst of these Dragonworlds are excellent. He has personally interviewed hundreds of revolutionary fighters in many past and ongoing violent conflicts.

Bell insightfully discusses why the US military has had such a difficult time responding to Dragonwars. Specifically, he postulates that revolutionary conflicts such as those in Northern Ireland, Lebanon, South Africa and Vietnam are almost incomprehensible to a US society used to settling political conflicts through compromise, consensus



and negotiation. As an institution that quintessentially reflects US society's ideals, values and beliefs,

the US military is similarly uncertain and confused about how to conduct Dragonwars.

Because Dragonwars are not going to go away, the US military must improve its ability to respond to them. Bell does not recommend more funding, weapons or personnel; he shrewdly realizes that in MOOTW less is often more. He urges military leaders to give special operations forces more support and consideration. Such a recommendation is well worth heeding in the aftermath of the stunningly successful US victory in the Persian Gulf War. The US military, being all too willing to refight the last successful war, could otherwise be oblivious to new national security threats.

Ernest H. Evans,
Leavenworth, Kansas

MR Letters

Battle Command Training Needs Strategy

Colonel Ronald Bertha's thought-provoking article, "Battle Command: Replicating the CTC Experience" (*Military Review*, November-December 2000), suggests that replicating combat training exercises (CTC) during home-station training is important and necessary. However, it is insufficient to solve the problem. Bertha's suggestion introduces the larger issue associated with battle command training—the absence of a comprehensive Army training strategy to address leader and leader-team preparation.

Effective battle command training at home station should align with an overall strategy that addresses how individual, team, staff and commander tasks are learned and mutually reinforced at the schoolhouse, in the unit and through self-study. Those designing a training program for battle command must assess the total requirement and only then address the home-station piece within that larger context.

The home-station program should identify, train and sustain battle command tasks that apply throughout a career. Army policy and Bertha seem to isolate battle command tasks to the battalion level. Regardless of where training occurs, battalion-level battle command must relate vertically to actions at brigade and company levels—if not two levels above and below—and horizontally within the organization between the commander and the staff/staff groups and with adjacent battalion commanders.

Commanders cannot structure effective training without first understanding which tools best teach the specific tasks to be trained. Requisite understanding includes a precisely defined training context to account for varying complexity among tactical missions. Until basic skills are mastered, attempting advanced skills wastes time. That is why the Army categorizes training into crawl, walk and run levels.

Home-station training must de-

velop leaders as individuals and as members of competent, cohesive leader-teams. The leader training aspect of a CTC experience focuses on general staff preparation before arrival, but battle command training occurs essentially at the CTC rotation itself, and improvement often comes more during post-CTC reflection than during CTC performance. Leaders must learn by doing at the CTC because few practical battle command training alternatives are available to the unit commander. No comprehensive training strategy identifies leader or leader-team battle command tasks or the tools needed for training them during home-station train-up or sustainment.

The good news is that superb, repetitive learning experiences at a midintensity battle rhythm clearly improve battle command performance at the CTC. The bad news is that it is an isolated, too-infrequent opportunity. Without a leader and leader-team strategy for battle command